

C.I.A. Is Reported Set to Channel Aid to Contras

By RICHARD HALLORAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 17 — If Congress approves the military aid for the Nicaraguan rebels that President Reagan has requested, the Central Intelligence Agency is ready with a basic plan for providing them with arms and training, according to Administration and Congressional officials.

The officials said Stinger antiaircraft missiles would be high on the C.I.A.'s list of weapons for the insurgents. The weapons would be shipped to Honduras and turned over to the rebels as soon as possible, the officials said.

They said the Stingers, which are shoulder-fired weapons able to hit a helicopter more than three miles away, were urgently needed by the rebels to protect encampments, ammunition and supply depots and vehicles from attack by gunships. The Nicaraguan Government has at least eight Soviet-built MI-24 gunships armed with rockets,

bombs and machine guns, according to the Defense Department.

Of the \$100 million aid sought by Mr. Reagan, \$50 million would be used to buy arms, ammunition and other equipment and \$20 million for packing and transport and for training, the officials said. The remaining \$30 million would be used to buy food, clothing, boots, shelter, medicine and other items considered to be humanitarian aid.

The training would be in Honduras, where the rebels have bases, and would most likely be conducted by the Army's Special Forces. The American instructors, better known as Green Berets, would not enter Nicaragua.

A few American officers and senior sergeants would train the rebels in marksmanship and in small unit tactics such as laying ambushes and attacking guard posts, officials said. They said the rebels would also be trained in how to use explosives to blow

up bridges and power plants.

The officials said that leadership and operational planning would be stressed since the insurgents appeared to have lacked the ability to mount coordinated operations.

The Green Berets would also teach what is called civic action, or ways to win political support, the officials said. Gen. John R. Galvin, commander of United States forces in Central America, told Congress last week that the ability of the rebels to communicate an ideological message was "somewhat stunted."

Equipment to be sent would include radios, the officials said. General Galvin said that improved communications would be vital to the rebels' operations.

Similarly, the general said, better logistics were necessary for the rebels to sustain operations within Nicaragua. Trucks were therefore included in the C.I.A. list, the officials said.

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U.S. SAID TO WEIGH TRAINING CONTRAS

By RICHARD HALLORAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 13 — Defense Department officials said tonight that President Reagan was prepared to send military advisers to train rebels fighting the Nicaraguan Government if Congress approved the \$100 million in aid the President has requested for the insurgents.

It was the first indication that the Administration was ready to give direct assistance to the forces known as contras that are fighting the leftist Sandinista Government in Managua.

The officials emphasized, however, that the United States advisers would not be permitted to enter Nicaragua.

In addition, the officials said, the United States would be prepared to share intelligence information with the contras. Until now, the official position of the Administration has been to avoid contact between American officials and the contras in Honduras and Nicaragua.

Unit Trains Insurgents

Insurgency and training other soldiers for insurgency is a primary mission of the Army's Special Forces, popularly known as Green Berets, with headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C. The Green Berets trained insurgents and counterinsurgents in Vietnam.

The initial United States military mission to Indochina in 1954 had as a primary task the training of Vietnamese soldiers in both conventional organization and tactics and guerrilla warfare to be used against forces then known as the Viet Minh.

If the \$100 million requested by the President is approved by Congress, the Pentagon officials said, the next step would be to determine with the contras the weapons, equipment and training they would need. At that time, they said, a request for help on training would be considered favorably.

In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Wednesday, Gen. John R. Galvin, the commander of American forces in Central America, called for "comprehensive United States support" for the Democratic Resistance Forces that have bases in Honduras and mount forays across the border into Nicaragua.

Faster Improvement With Aid

Asked to explain "comprehensive," the general said that the contras would gradually improve themselves without America help and that they would improve more rapidly with American help, but that "if military experts were able to work with them, they would improve faster."

He was not asked to elaborate on what appeared to be a suggestion that United States military trainers be dispatched to aid the contras.

Pentagon officials said tonight that General Galvin had been looking ahead to the time when the contras might ask for help. They said that no such request had been received but that it would be viewed favorably if it came.

The Defense Department and Central Intelligence Agency are currently prohibited from providing intelligence information, military training or lethal equipment to the contras under terms of a \$27 million humanitarian aid package Congress approved last year. Mr. Reagan has requested \$100 million in assistance, without a prohibition on the use of military advisers.

Reagan Opposes Restrictions

President Reagan, in an interview with The Baltimore Sun today, said: "We feel that if we are going to help them with weapons and arms that we ought to be freed of those restrictions and allowed to provide this other assistance to them."

The President also said he wanted to be able "to give them military intelligence and to help with military planning." A transcript of the interview was later issued by the White House.

The Pentagon officials said the contras might use some of the \$100 million, \$70 million of which would be for military assistance, to pay for United States military trainers. Many countries have received military training from mobile training teams. The teams have from two to more than a hundred American military advisers.

But the officials said that there was no thought given to sending American advisers into Nicaragua on military operations with the contras. They said the advisers would remain at training bases outside of Nicaragua, meaning Honduras. more

In a brief interview after the hearing on Capitol Hill Wednesday, General Galvin disagreed with recent reports that contra strength had deteriorated. He said the contras had 20,000 soldiers and were growing. While they need better logistics, planning and communications, he said, "there are a lot of good fighters out there."

But the general also said, "I do not believe that the United States should insert military power into that area." President Reagan and others in the Administration have suggested that such action might be necessary if military aid is withheld from the anti-Government Nicaraguan forces.

General Galvin, of the Army, is the commander-in-chief of the Southern Command, with headquarters in Panama, and is responsible for United States military operations south of Mexico. He appeared before the Senate Armed Services Committee to give his annual report.

The general said intelligence showed the number of "shooting contacts" between anti-Government and Sandinista forces had risen to 100 a month from 120. "There's a lot of fighting going on out there," he said. In addition, he said, the contras had expanded operations from the northern highlands to the central and southern portions of the country.